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Blackhawk

in

THE TUNNEL OF DEATH!



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BLACKHAWK



THE BLACKHAWKS CAME TO FIGHT
A BATTLE OF *PEACE*...TO CONQUER
NATURE FOR THE SAKE OF TWO
NATIONS SEPARATED BY IMPASSABLE
MOUNTAINS...
BUT A STRANGE AND RUTHLESS
ENEMY CHANGED IT TO A BATTLE OF
WAR!

NEAR THE SKY-ASCENDING MOUNTAIN
RANGE THAT, SINCE THE DAWN OF HISTORY,
HAS SEPARATED THE NATION OF *HUANEC*
FROM ITS NEIGHBOR, *GALARDO*...

SEE, MAZTLA! THE
BLACKHAWK
PLANES! THEY
ARE COMING TO
HELP US, AS OUR
PRESIDENT
HIMSELF
REQUESTED!

LET THEM BE
GUIDED TO THE
TEMPORARY AIRPORT!
I SHALL JOIN OUR
CHIEF ENGINEER TO
WELCOME THEM THERE!

WE'RE LOOKING
FOR *RALGO*, CHIEF
ENGINEER OF THE
ATTEMPTED TUNNEL
THROUGH THE
MOUNTAINS FROM
HUANEC TO
GALARDO!

WELCOME,
BLACKHAWK!
I AM *RALGO*...
AND THIS IS
MAZTLA, MY
ASSOCIATE
IN THE WORK
ON THE HUANEC
SIDE OF THE RANGE!

THE LEAGUE OF DEMOCRACIES
HAILES THE TUNNEL PROJECT
AS A TRIUMPH! IT WILL MAKE
COMMERCE...AND FRIENDLY
UNDERSTANDING...EASY
BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES!

BUT THE
TUNNEL
ITSELF
PROVES NO
EASY PROBLEM,
BLACKHAWK!





THE NEW AND POWERFUL COMPOUND IS FETCHED. THERE, OLAF'S EFFORTS HAVE GIVEN US A PLACE TO LODGE OUR CHARGE! I WANT EVERYONE TO LEAVE THE TUNNEL... THE BLACKHAWKS WILL TAKE THE RISK OF THIS TEST!

NO GOOD WILL COME OF THIS FOREIGN MEDDLING!



WHAT A MIGHTY BLAST!

FOLLOW ME, MEN! LET'S SEE WHAT SUCCESS WE'VE HAD!



ALL RIGHT, LET'S CLEAR THIS AWAY! THE BLAST WAS A SUCCESS!

THEN... YOU MEAN WE DON'T HAVE TO DIG AROUND THAT HAND STRUTUM?



CHUCK, STANISLAW, YOU DISTRUST CHOP CHOP, ANDRE? EACH OF YOU'LL A PLANE TO BLACK-HAWK ISLAND AND BRING BACK MORE EXPLOSIVE! WE'LL MAKE A TUNNEL HERE IN RECORD TIME!

THE STRANGERS, BUT ARE THEY NOT EFFICIENT?



TOO EFFICIENT! THE ANCIENT DEVILS BENEATH THE MOUNTAIN WILL PUNISH THEM! AND I BEGIN TO WONDER IF THE TUNNEL'S A GOOD THING!

EVERY HONEST WORKMAN SHOULD HAVE A VOICE IN THE WORK, MY FRIEND! WHY DO YOU SUSPECT THE TUNNEL IS A?



UP TO NOW, THE PEOPLE OF GALANCO WERE STRANGERS TO HUANEC! PERHAPS ENEMIES! WITH A TUNNEL, THEY MAY INVAD... ATTACK...

THAT'S NONSENSE! YOU'LL FIND THE PEOPLE OF GALANCO ARE MUCH LIKE YOURSELF, AND ARE GO TO BE GOOD FRIENDS!



YOU SAY I SPEAK NONSENSE! I TAKE INSULTS FROM NO SNEERING FOREIGNER!

LOOK OUT, BLACKHAWK!



I NEVER SAW SUCH A BLOW AS THAT... NEVER!

HA, LADY! THAT BLOW BECAUSE YOU NEVER SAW BLACKHAWK IN ACTION!





I'LL SPILT YOUR WICKED FACE!

STAY OUT OF THIS, YOU TWO! I CAN HANDLE HIM, PICK-ARE AND ALL!



YOU USE BLACK WASH! AGAINST ME!

NO! JUST SCIENTIFIC SELF-DEFENSE!



NOW STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS, OR YOU MAY RESULT GET HURT!

THAT MAN CAN DRAW HIS PAY AND LEAVE THIS PROJECT! I'LL HAVE NO MORE AND VIOLENCE!



AS FOR YOU, BLACKHAWK, YOU'RE A TRIFLE TOO QUICK TO FIGHT TO SUIT ME! I DEMAND THAT...

I FOUGHT IN MY OWN DEFENSE, BALDO! AND I'M HERE TO HELP FINISH THIS TUNNEL, NOT TO ARGUE! SO LET'S STOP PICKERING!



WE'VE ENOUGH EXPLOSIVE FOR ANOTHER BLAST! LET'S TRY TO KNOCK LOOSE TWICE AS MUCH OF THAT TROUBLE-SOME ROCK!

HE'S HIGH-HANDED, MAZTLA! I'VE HALF A MIND TO REQUEST THAT THE PRESIDENT WITHDRAW HIS REQUEST FOR BLACKHAWK'S HELP!



BUT THE BLACKHAWKS REMAIN AT THEIR ASSIGNMENT... AFTER NEW SUPPLIES OF EXPLOSIVES ARRIVE, THE TUNNEL IS EXTENDED...

THIS TIME WE'LL TRY TO BLAST WITH AS MUCH OF A CHARGE AS SEEMS SAFE TO USE! FILL THIS HOLE AND SET UP THE WIRES!



AS THE BLACKHAWKS RETURN TOWARD THE OPEN...

ONCE OUTSIDE, I'LL GIVE DRUCK THE SIGNAL TO SET IT OFF!

LISTEN! IT SEEM TO SET OFF NOW!



DUCK, ALL OF YOU! THE
ROOF'S COMING IN!

WHY DID YOU SET
OFF THE BLAST?
YOUR FRIENDS
WERE SUCH
SPLENDID
FELLOWS...

I DIDN'T SET
IT OFF! AND
DON'T SAY THEY
WERE UNTIL
WE KNOW WHETHER
OR NOT THEY'VE
BEEN DESTROYED!

BLACKHAWK!
BLACKHAWK!
ANSWER ME!

HERE WE ARE,
CHUCK... A LITTLE
SHAKEN, BUT
ALL RIGHT OTHER-
WISE!



WE MANAGED TO SQUEEZE
UNDER A LEDGE WHEN THE
ROOF FELL ON US! HOW DO
THE SWITCH GET THROWN
BEFORE I GAVE THE WORD?

I HADN'T TOUCHED THAT
SWITCH! COME OUT AND
SEE!



SOMEBODY MUST HAVE
HAD ANOTHER FUSE LINE!
WHAT'S THAT PIECE
OF ROCK?

IT CAME FROM THE CEILING
ABOVE US! LOOK... THE STYLE
OF BREAK SHOWS IT WAS
ORDINARY EXPLOSIVE... NOT
OUR SPECIAL HIGH-POWER
MAKE!



IN OTHER WORDS, A SECOND PLANT
OF EXPLOSIVE WAS SET OFF... TO
BLOW UP OUR PLANT AND DESTROY
US!

HEHN! ANY
SUSPICIONS,
BLACKHAWK?



IF I HAVE SUSPICIONS, I'D BETTER
NOT TELL ANYONE YET... NOT EVEN
YOU, RALGO!

LOOK! THE MINER
WHO ATTACKED
BLACKHAWK...
LURKING RIGHT
THERE!











MIGHT HE NOT BE A VALUABLE CAPTIVE? A WORTHY RANSOM WOULD BE PAID...

NO! BLACKHAWK ALIVE IS EVER A MENACE TO US! BLACKHAWK DEAD IS AN ASSET!



NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO DESTROY HIM, ALONG WITH THIS OTHER USELESS PRISONER!

SO THEY KIDNAPPED YOU THROUGH A SECRET DOOR IN THE TUNNEL, TOO!



THAT'S TRUE, BLACKHAWK! UNLUCKY WAS THE DAY I AGREED TO COME BACK TO WORK!

WHAT ABOUT MAZTLA?



I WAS KNOCKED ON THE HEAD, LIKE YOU! I NEVER SAW WHAT BECAME OF MAZTLA... SHE MUST BE HELD PRISONER ELSEWHERE!

NOW THESE HOODED HOODLUMS SAY THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US! ARE YOU AFRAID?



AFRAID? NO, NOT OF A DEATH I UNDERSTAND! AND I AM ASHAMED THAT I BELIEVED IN DEVILS AND EVIL SPIRITS!

BRING ALL THE OTHERS OF OUR BAND! I WANT THEM TO WITNESS THE DESTRUCTION OF BLACKHAWK, WHO SO LONG HAS DEFIED ALL ENEMIES!



YOUR FOLLOWERS WILL ADMIRE YOU, NO DOUBT, FOR KILLING DEFENSELESS PRISONERS IN COLD BLOOD!

I DON'T SEEK ADMIRATION! WE ARE A PRACTICAL LITTLE GROUP!



NOW THE TUNNEL WILL BE ABANDONED! AS SOON AS WE ARE SAFE IN DOING SO, WE'LL CART AWAY THE WEALTH WE FOUND HERE, AND LIVE LIKE ROYALTY!



BRIEF MOMENTS LATER, BEFORE THE HOODED GANG RECOVERS...



COME ON, MEN, CHARGE THEM!

UNTIL WE SO I CAN GET INTO THIS!



THE LEADER OF THESE MASKED COWARDS DOESN'T DARE STAY AND FIGHT!

QUICKLY THE WORLD'S GREATEST FIGHTING TEAM OVERWHELMS ITS OPPOSITION...



MERCY! WE SURRENDER!

I OWE YOU MY LIFE! BUT HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO RESCUE US?

WE COULD NOT FIND WHERE BLACKHAWK HAD VANISHED TO... AND SO, PARBLEU! WE MAKE ZE BLAST TO FIND OUT!



BUT WERE /SS BLACKHAWK?

I'LL PADDLE ACROSS THE LAKE... CLIMB THROUGH THE UPWARD PASSAGE TO THE OUTER VALLEYS...



NO, YOU DON'T! COME BACK AND FACE THE MUSIC WITH THE REST!

YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR!

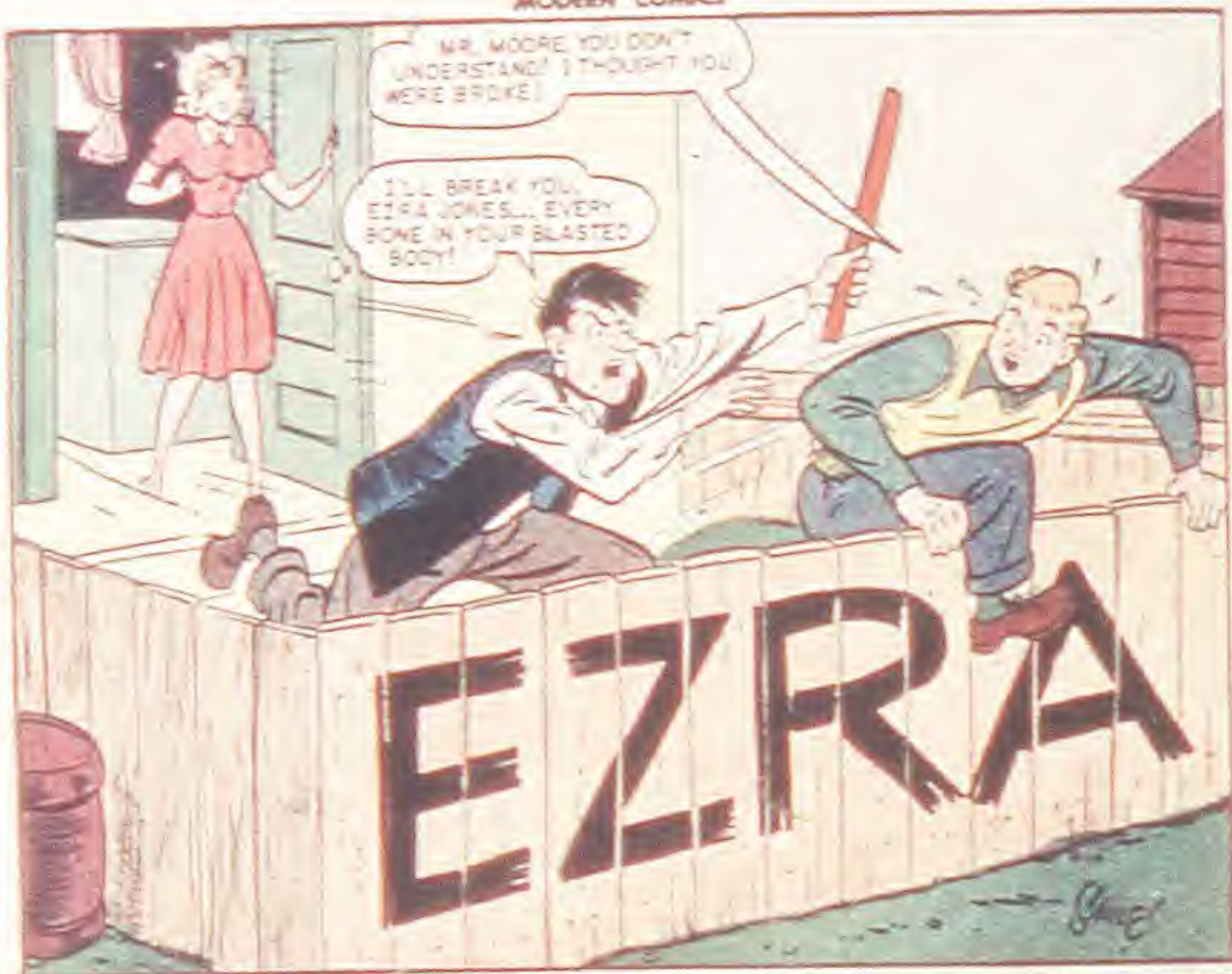


I'LL ANSWER YOU WITH A SMASHING BLOW ON YOUR SKULL!



















Blackhawk's Luck

It looked like curtains—the final curtains—for the Blackhawks.

As they had winged over the trackless Barren Desert, a distress signal from ruins at an oasis had caused them to drop down and investigate. But, once out of their planes and away toward the oasis, the signals proved to be a trap. From hiding holes under all the dunes to the horizon, rushed grim, bearded men in turbans and cloaks, the outlaw army of Sidi Savarr. Sidi Savarr had ever hated the Blackhawks and intended to destroy them completely.

Had not the nearest contingent been so eager, it might have succeeded. That nearest contingent charged in to close quarters without waiting for reinforcements. Moments later the Blackhawks had overpowered this first rush of enemy, secured guns and ammunition, and had retreated toward the oasis. There, amid the tumbledown walls of an ancient deserted village, they fought back wave after wave of attackers.

But it was nearly sunset. The hosts of Sidi Savarr were still ringed around them. And the Blackhawks had but a few cartridges left. Another charge from all sides, under cover of the thickening gloom, and it would be all over.

"Zey have us cut off from our planes, re dogs!" growled Andra. "If we could but reach re place where re planes are—"

"Jawohl," agreed Hendrickson. "Ve could fight dem back mit our machine guns und take to der air. But dey are thick between us und der planes."

"Why you ban waste der breath?" demanded big Olaf. "All ay ban want is for dem to come. Ay die fighting, ay bet you."

"What about it, Blackhawk?" Stanialau asked the leader.

But Blackhawk was looking at the battered inscription on the wall behind which they were kneeling. "Look," he said, pointing. "What does it say?"

Chuck, who understood desert writing, scowled over the half-blotted words. "As far as I can make out," he said, "it's information about how the people of this village left, long ago. Desert raiders kept attacking them to get this oasis and the fountain of water. So they left, and first blocked up the fountain, right at this point."

"Interesting," said Blackhawk. With a spear taken from one of Sidi Savarr's men he prodded the sand, here, then beyond. He exclaimed in satisfaction.

"Are you looking for the old fountain?" demanded Stanialau.

"I am, and here it is, just below us," Blackhawk scooped away sand. "See these rocks, plastered together to hold it down?"

"But while you look, re raiders form for re final charge," cried Andra. "Enfin, mes amis, prepare to die fighting!"

"No!" called Blackhawk. "Bring those rifles here. Thrust them into the chinks between these plastered rocks. Stand to right and left, and wait until I give the order!"

Only the discipline learned in a hundred fights all over the world made his followers obey without question.

Sidi Savarr's band rushed from the direction of the parked planes. War cries and whoops of triumph rent the evening air. The charge struck home almost to the wall behind which the Blackhawks waited. Sidi Savarr, leading this charge in person, was ready to leap upon them. His black-bearded face was exultant, his scimitar raised on high.

"Now!" yelled Blackhawk. "Pry those rocks apart!"

The strong arms of the Blackhawks exerted themselves. The mortar fastenings gave and crumbled.

Immediately the long imprisoned fountain gushed forth. Pent up for years, its force was that of a flood torrent. The Blackhawks leaped away to either side, and gathered behind, but the waters, striking like a jet from an enormous firehose, drenched and overwhelmed the first wave of enemy. Sidi Savarr and his picked fighters were dashed back on those behind. The thirsty desert flowed with the water. Unused to such an experience, the superstitious raiders screamed with fear.

A moment later they were fleeing in all directions, as from black magic used against them.

Free to go, the Blackhawks returned to their planes.

"It was luck," said Blackhawk, "plain Blackhawk luck."

"No, no," chuckled Chop Chop. "This time was special Blackhawk luck."

IT LOOKS AS IF
HE STARTED SOME-
THING HE CAN'T
FINISH!

IF I EVER
GET OUT OF
THIS I'LL
RUN HIM IN!

HELP! STOP!
IT'S ALL A MISTAKE!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO IT!
THEY'LL SACRIFICE ME!
HELP!

Will BRAGG



HMMM! I SEE THE FAMOUS
EUROPEAN HYPNOTIST PROE
SCHMITZEL HAS ARRIVED
IN THIS COUNTRY!

THAT MAN MUST
HAVE A GREAT MIND
TO BE ABLE TO DO
SUCH AMAZING
THINGS!



HARRUMPF! NOTHING
TO IT, GENTLEMEN!
MERELY MIND OVER
MATTER! THE MIND
IS LIKE A....

BLAH, BLAH,
BLAH! DON'T
TELL US YOU'VE
GOT A MIND!

I THOUGHT
IT VANISHED
WITH HIS
HAIR!





SAD IF YOU DON'T SHOW ME WHAT YOUR RENT LOOKS LIKE BY SATURDAY NIGHT. WILL BRAGG, YOU CAN HYPNOTIZE YOURSELF INTO A NEW LOOSING! NOW SCRAM!



WOOL MACKEREL! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING—AND FAST! HA, I'VE GOT IT! SUBTERFUGE!



ONE MOMENT LATER...

SEE HOW EASY IT IS KIDS? AND YOU'LL HAVE FREE ICE CREAM SODAS AND MOVIE PASSES FOR A MONTH... IF WE PUT IT OVER!



WILL BRAGG, HERE'S THE OPPORTUNITY YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR ALL YOUR LIFE! MOVIE CONTRACT! YOUR PICTURE PLASTERED ON BILLBOARDS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY! IF OTHER DUMPS CAN DO IT, SO CAN YOU!



VERY GOOD, MR. BRAGG! SOME OF MY DISCOVERIES—AH—ARE MAKING AS MUCH AS \$1000 AN HOUR! I SEE NO REASON, AFTER WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD ME OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, WHY YOU CAN'T TOP THEM ALL! WE'LL SUPPLY THE COSTUMES AND SETS!



HERRRUMPF! THE BRAGGS HAVE ALWAYS HAD GREAT MINDS!

LATER, BACKSTAGE...

ONE DOKE, FELLERS! WHEN I CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM THE AUDIENCE, COME UP FAST ON THE STAGE! REMEMBER... FAST!

I-I-HOPE EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT, MR. BRAGG!



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! PRESENTING WILL BRAGG! THE WORLD'S GREATEST HYPNOTIST!



WILL SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE PLEASE STEP FORWARD TO BE HYPNOTIZED!











PLAY PIANO THE FIRST DAY... OR DON'T PAY!

Here's Your Chance to
BE POPULAR!



WALLY: NEVER! THAT'S A LESSON IN MY LIFE! BUT NOW I CAN PLAY WELL, THANKS TO THE AUTOMATIC CHORD SELECTOR AND THE DEAN ROSS SIMPLE AND METHODICAL WAY TO TRY IT!

IF IT'S AS EASY AS YOU SAY AND I ONLY COSTS 1/2 PRICE, I'LL SEND FOR IT RIGHT AWAY!

GUND: YOUR BETTY'S A MIDGE. NOW I GET INTERESTED EVERYWHERE! NO MORE WALL-FLOWER STUFF FOR ME!



It's impossible to play a song in 10 minutes!
I can't play a single note!
I don't know how to play!
I don't know how to play!
I don't know how to play!
I don't know how to play!
I don't know how to play!
I don't know how to play!

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ARE WILD
ABOUT THE
WAY I PLAY
PIANO—CAN'T
THANK DEAN
ROSS ENOUGH



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